

REMARKS

Claims 4-7 are pending. By this Amendment, Claims 4-7 are cancelled and Claims 8-10 are added. Applicants respectfully submit that no new matter is presented herein.

On June 1, 2007, a paper was mailed from the Examiner holding the Response of April 9, 2007 to not be fully responsive to the Office Action of January 9, 2007 because it canceled all of the apparatus claims and presented new method claims. An examination and an action on the merits had been given on the apparatus claims. One month was given to correct this matter. The above newly submitted apparatus Claims 8-10 are prior Claims 1 – 3 rewritten so as to comply with the Office Action of January 9, 2007 as set forth below.

Title

The Title of the application is amended herein to more clearly be indicative of the claimed invention.

Claim Rejections - 35 U.S.C. § 101

Claim 1-3 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 101 for being directed to non-statutory subject matter. In particular, the Office Action noted claim 1 appears to be directed to an apparatus and a method, which is inappropriate. As such, Applicants have rewritten the claims in a manner believed to be responsive to the rejection as the method steps have been deleted from the claims, such that the claims are now clearly directed to an apparatus. Applicants respectfully request withdrawal of the rejection.

Claim Rejection - 35 U.S.C. §112

Claims 1-3 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph. Applicants have rewritten the claims in a manner believed to be responsive to the rejection. Applicants respectfully request withdrawal of the rejection.

Claim Objections

Claims 1-3 were objected to for lacking reasonable indents. Applicants have rewritten the claims in a manner believed to be responsive to the objection such that the claims contain reasonable indents. Applicants respectfully request withdrawal of the objection.

Claim Rejections -- 35 U.S.C. §102

Claims 1-3 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent Number 4,407,667 to Le Noane et al. (hereinafter Le Noane.) To the extent that such a rejection might be given to Claims 8-10, Applicants would respectfully traverse the rejection for the following reason(s).

Claim 8 recites an apparatus for extending an extension optical fiber glass body which includes, among other features, an upper holder, which holds an upper end of the extension optical fiber glass body to be extended, and a lower holder, provided at a position coinciding with an axial center of the upper holder and facing the upper holder. See Figure 2 of the application for an exemplary embodiment.

Applicants respectfully submit Le Noane fails to disclose, teach or otherwise suggest such features.

Specifically, looking at Figure 3 of Le Noane, Applicants note the bars (7, 8) that are welded together at the welding station (9) are transported by rollers (11, 12) and aligned by guides (22). However, given the structural nature of the rollers (11, 12) and

guides (22) and how they merely engage the outer circumferential surface of the bars (7, 8) and not the upper and/or lower ends of the bars (7, 8), Applicants note that not one of the rollers (11, 12) and guides (22) satisfies the recited feature of a lower holder that is positioned to coincide with an axial center of an upper holder while facing the upper holder.

Put simply, Le Noane fails to disclose, teach or otherwise suggest an upper holder, which holds an upper end of the extension optical fiber glass body to be extended, and a lower holder, which is provided at a position coinciding with an axial center of the upper holder and facing the upper holder.

To qualify as prior art, each and every feature of a rejected claim must be disclosed by a cited prior art reference. To establish *prima facie* obviousness, each and every feature recited by the rejected claim must be taught or suggested by the applied art of record.

As explained above, Le Noane fails to disclose, teach or suggest each and every feature recited by Claim 8. Therefore, Applicants respectfully submit that Claim 8 is not anticipated by nor rendered obvious in view of Le Noane. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully submit that Claim 8 should be deemed allowable.

Claims 9 and 10 depend from Claim 8. It is respectfully submitted that these dependent claims be deemed allowable at least for the same reason(s) Claim 8 is allowable, as well as for the additional subject matter recited therein.

Applicants respectfully request withdrawal of the rejection.

Conclusion

In view of the foregoing, reconsideration of the application, withdrawal of the outstanding objection and rejections, allowance of Claims 8-10, and the prompt issuance of a Notice of Allowability are respectfully solicited.

Should the Examiner believe anything further is desirable in order to place this application in better condition for allowance, the Examiner is requested to contact the undersigned at the telephone number listed below.

In the event this paper is not considered to be timely filed, the Applicants respectfully petition for an appropriate extension of time. Any fees for such an extension, together with any additional fees that may be due with respect to this paper, may be charged to counsel's Deposit Account No. 01-2300, **referencing docket number 103203.00010.**

Respectfully submitted,
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